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Estate gives \$1.37 million bequest

A Colby farm couple has left Colby Community College and the Thomas County Community Foundation a total of \$1.37 million from their estates.

The gifts were announced Friday by Nick Wells, executive director of the Colby Community College Foundation, and Melinda Olson, director of the community foundation. The bequests,



Pat and Max Embree

from a trust established for Pat Embree, included roughly \$1 million to the college and \$370,000 to the community agency, they said.

Pat Embree, a longtime resident of Colby, graduated from Colby High School in 1950. She met her husband Max while attending the University of Kan-

sas, and they married June 9, 1953. Following graduation, they moved to Colby in 1955, where they established a farming and ranching operation.

Wells said the Embrees were active supporters of the college, the Prairie Museum of Art and History and the Thomas County Historical Society. They provided service and leadership to the agricultural community for over 50 years, he said.

Mrs. Embree died in October 2005, and her husband on July 10, at the age of 80.

"The Embrees contributed to the success and growth of many organizations in Thomas County and western Kansas," Wells said. "Their service was not

just limited to Colby and the agricultural community; they were active in local and state Democratic Party affairs and served in leadership roles on several boards.

"A portion of the gift has been used to directly assist the college. The remaining funds will be used by the college for academic enhancement, with emphasis on hiring and retaining master teachers of stature, and for continued support of the Max Pickerill Lecture Series."

Olson said the money received by the community foundation has been set up in an endowed fund, the Patricia A. Embree Trust Fund. This "field of interest" fund

will support charitable, educational, literary and/or cultural groups and programs in Thomas County, including the museum, Pioneer Memorial Library, the Senior Progress Center and other senior citizens' services, Genesis-Thomas County food bank, art workshops and shows, history and Kansas humanities programs, scouting and music activities.

"We are honored to administer this fund that will help so many programs and people in Thomas County," she said. "We are very thankful to Patricia for being so forward thinking in her philanthropic vision."

Student leaders join to collect food

Colby Community College and Colby High School students have joined forces to collect items for the Genesis-Thomas County food bank.

Circle K Club and Student Government members from the college and Student Council members from the high school will be collecting nonperishable food items at the college games Wednesday and the high school games Thursday.

The Trojans will play Seward County Community College on Wednesday, with the women's

game starting at 6 p.m. at the Community Building. Admission to all games will be three food items per person.

Colby High will play Dodge City on Thursday at the Community Building and the high school.

Members of the college and high school groups will be working at both games.

For information, contact college Athletic Director Ryan Sturdy at 460-5548 or Christy Garretson at the high school, 460-5300.

Pope appoints new bishop for Colby area

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Benedict XVI has named a new bishop for the Salina diocese, a priest from the Oklahoma diocese where his predecessor now serves.

The Vatican said Monday that the pontiff selected Monsignor Edward John Weisenburger for the post. The 51-year-old has been serving as vicar general of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma and rector of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Cathedral in Oklahoma City.

A native of Illinois, Monsignor Weisenburger was ordained in 1987. He has studied theology in Belgium and canon, or church, law at St. Paul University in Ottawa, Canada.

In Salina, church officials said a date for Monsignor Weisenburger's installation as the 11th bishop of Salina would be set soon.

He succeeds Bishop Paul S. Coakley, who was named archbishop of Oklahoma City on Dec. 16, 2010.

In 1992, Monsignor Weisenburger was appointed vice chancellor and adjutant judicial vicar of the Oklahoma City archdiocese. In addition to Chancery duties, he provided weekend parish and prison ministries from 1992 to 1995 and served as an on-site chaplain for rescue workers in the weeks following the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

The bishop-elect has served as pastor of two parishes, from 1995 to 2002 at Holy Trinity Parish in Okarche, Okla., and from 2002 until now as rector of the cathedral in Oklahoma City.

He was born Dec. 23, 1960, in Alton, Ill., to Edward John and Asella (Walters) Weisenburger, the third of four surviving children. His father, now retired, was a military officer and his mother, who was born and raised in Ellis County, Kan., was a homemaker.

He spent two years of his childhood in Hays, but grew up primarily in Lawton, Okla., where he graduated from high school in 1979. He attended Conception Seminary College in Conception, Mo., graduating with honors in 1983. He then attended the American College Seminary at the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium.

His mother died on March 22, 1998. His father lives in Oklahoma City.

Governor shuns pleas for pardons on crimes

LAWRENCE (AP) — Kansans who were denied pardons by Gov. Sam Brownback in 2011 ranged from convicted murderers to alleged traffic law violators.

The governor denied all 39 pardon requests last year.

The Lawrence Journal-World (bit.ly/ArQerD) submitted an open records request to Brownback's office, which provided the letters from the governor's office to pardon applicants.

The Kansas Prison Review Board, which reviews pardons be-

fore sending them to the governor, denied the open records request for the full pardon applications, citing an exemption in the state's Open Records Act.

The pardon requests include 10 people convicted of murder or manslaughter and a 63-year-old Wichita man who says he was wrongly convicted of a right-of-way traffic violation. Eddie Mendia operates the nonprofit Homeless Search Corp., and says he was pulled over because of his Mexican heritage.



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press

Trees in front of a house on Fourth Street were laced with snow Saturday after snow fell in Colby on Friday afternoon and evening. The official total snow accumulation for Colby was 2 inches.

Storm leaves area damp, sunny

The howling blizzard expected in Colby on Friday and Saturday turned out to be not so hazardous at all.

Colby got only a couple of inches of snow. There were no car crashes, power outages or any other issues reported from the storm, which began on Friday afternoon and was over by Saturday morning.

Colby received 0.37 of an inch of moisture from the 2 inches of snow recorded at the official weather station at the Kansas State University Northwest Research and Extension Center.

Colby Public Schools, Sacred Heart Catholic School and Heartland Christian School decided to cancel Friday classes Thursday afternoon in anticipation of the storm, as did Goodland Public Schools.

Colby High and Colby Community College postponed sporting events that were to take place on Friday and Saturday in the face of the blizzard warning. Northwest Kansas

had been slated to get up to 10 inches of snow over two days.

In Thomas County and most of western Kansas, predictions for a big blizzard didn't materialize. The Colorado Front Range and plains felt the brunt of the storm, with Interstate 70 closed for most of a day.

Meteorologist Dave Thede at the National Weather Service office in Goodland said today that the storm encountered a "dry slot" in the upper atmosphere, an area of no moisture from 10,000 to 20,000 or 25,000 feet. This caused drizzle and flurries, which is what our area got, instead of nice, fat snowflakes.

The dry slot came across Goodland and headed east on Friday, he said. At that time the temperatures were still in the 40s and the moisture came down as rain instead of snow. Winds weren't as strong as expected, either.

However, out along I-70 in Colorado, the winds were 30 to 35 mph with heavier snowfall. The roadway was closed from Burling-

ton to east of Denver by 9:52 a.m. Friday. The closure was extended to Goodland by 3:30 p.m. Friday as motels in Burlington filled up. It was called off Saturday morning, the Kansas Department of Transportation said, and traffic began to flow again.

Colby reported 2 inches of snow, while Selden reported 3. To the north, Atwood, 6 to 9 and Norton 8. Stratton, Flagler and Yuma, Colo., all reported 3 inches. Up in Nebraska, Mr. Thede said, North Platte had 3 inches, Grand Island 6 and Hastings 10.

Hardest hit by the storm was Denver and the foothills area. Denver reported up to a foot of snow and Boulder up to 18 inches.

The Associated Press reported that more than 600 flights out of Denver International Airport had to be canceled Friday.

While there were no power outages or wrecks reported in Thomas County, Hill City reported some accidents, and there were major electric outages in Nebraska.

County gets overtime complaint

By Kayla Cornett

Colby Free Press
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Road and Bridge employees came to the Thomas County commissioners during their end-of-the-month meeting Tuesday with a complaint about how overtime was being handled for work on a new pit at the landfill for construction and demolition debris.

The project at the landfill aims to prolong the life of the main trash pit, said landfill Supervisor Larry Jumper.

Road Foreman Bill Mariman, Francis Britton, Mark Boeger, Darrin Bell and Pete Schlageck came to the meeting last week. Mariman asked why Jumper, as a salaried county employee, was receiving overtime pay when others on salary are unable to get overtime for any project.

Boeger asked why Jumper told the workers they were done work-

ing at the landfill for the year, but he continued turning in overtime hours after that.

Chairman Ken Christiansen asked if any of the men had spoken with Jumper in the past five or six days, and all replied that they had not. Christiansen said Jumper had told him there will be no more eligible overtime hours for any employees on the project past Jan. 23. He said this was the first time the board had heard about the issue.

"I do not wish to micromanage Mr. Jumper," said Commissioner Paul Steele, adding that the commissioners originally approved \$5,000 in overtime at a half-time premium for the project.

"It wouldn't speak very well of the commissioners if we tried to micromanage Larry's budget and tell him, 'You gotta hire the Road and Bridge crew,'" Mr. Steele said, "and that's something I think you gentlemen have to work out."

Mariman said they would do that.

"And I hope that we have not seen the end of interdepartmental cooperation," Mr. Steele added, "because everything goes a lot smoother if you just get somebody and get the work done.... We've got a lot of nice project work left to be done on South Country Club."

Mariman brought up one last point, saying that county employees making \$10 or \$11 an hour would like the chance to work overtime instead of those who make more.

Christiansen said he understood, but the commissioners respect Jumper as a supervisor and try not to interfere with his or any other supervisor's decisions.

In other business, the commissioners:

• Approved the purchase of a Hotsy power washer for the Road and Bridge crew at \$3,995. Road

Supervisor Clair Schrock said he and Schlageck liked two different models, but the Hotsy is less noisy and is a better deal because of the service that comes with it.

• Heard from Shirley Weber for the Local Environmental Protection Group. She said the group had tested 17 water wells and 19 septic tanks that were contaminated. She said the state has decided to cut off money for the agency, a loss of 65 percent of its budget. However, Weber said she believes they have enough in their reserve fund to carry on for at least a year. She also provided the commissioners with the code manual the group uses.

• Approved an internal transfer of \$63,749 from the Kansas Counties Association Multi-Lined

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